





*Prelacy an Idol, and Prelates Idolaters : All Prelates, Maintainers of, and Complyers with Prelacy, charg'd with Idolatry, and proven guilty.*

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A

# S E R M O N.

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By the REVEREND and LEARNED

Mr. *James Fraser* of *Brae*,  
Minister of the Gospel at *Culross*.

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THE SECOND EDITION

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Matth. 15. 13, 14. --- Every Plant, which my Heavenly Father have not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone : They be blind Leaders of the Blind. And, --- both shall fall into the Ditch.

Hof. 4. 17. Ephraim is joined to Idols : Let him alone,

Luke 22. 25, 26. --- The Kings of the Gentiles exercise Lordship over them ; --- But ye shall not be so. See Matth. 20, 25, 26.

1 Pet. 5. 3. Neither as being Lords over God's Heritage, but being Ensamples to the Flock.

3 John 9. --- But Diotrephus, who loveth to have the Preeminence among them, receiveth us not.

2 John 9, 10, 11. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the Doctrine of Christ, hath not God : --- If there come any unto you and bring not this Doctrine, receive him not into your House, neither bid him God Speed. For he that biddeth him God speed, is Partaker of his evil Deeds.

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G L A S G O W :

Printed for, and sold by GEORGE PATON,  
Book-seller in *Linlithgow*, 1742.

## Advertisement.

**A**T George Paton's Shop in Linlithgow is to be sold, A Collection of several remarkable and valuable *Sermons, Speeches and Exhortations*, at renewing and subscribing the *National Covenant of Scotland*, and at the entering into and subscribing the *Solemn League and Covenant of the three Kingdoms of Scotland, England and Ireland*; wherein the Nature, Necessity and Excellency of the Duty of Covenanting, with the Evil and Danger of Apostacy, are clearly and convincingly held forth from the Word of God. By several reverend, learned and pious Divines of that Period.

*Likewise, if due Encouragement be given,*

**T**H E R E is going to the Press, and speedily will be published, and sold by George Paton at his Shop in Linlithgow, a Treatise, intituled, *The Lawfulness and Duty of Separation and Secession from corrupt Ministers and Churches*; wherein all the ordinary Objections and Arguments commonly advanced by the Prelates and Curats, and Messieurs *Williamson, Currie, Lawson*, and their Adherents, for hearing and joining with them, are fully and clearly answered and refuted. By the reverend and learned Mr. *James Fraser of Brae*, Minister of the Gospel at *Culross*: Written by his own Hand. Never before printed.

## T H E

## Publisher to the R E A D E R.

Candid Reader,

*[I]f you ask, why this Sermon is now published, it being long since preached? I answer, The two great Ends I had in view, were, 1st, The Edification of GOD's People who endeavour to keep his Ways. 2dly, The Conviction of such, as walk in forbidden Paths, in which they cannot expect to find Peace, Isa. 59. 8.*

*Tho' there be many new Sermons published, yet scarce any of them evidence so much Zeal by a free and faithful Pleading for Truth and Reformation, as this; the Author being an eminent Watchman set on Zion's Watch-tower, Ezek. 33. 8. Jer. 23. 22. did zealously oppose the Errors and Defections of his Day, which, alas! prevail at this Day, with little, or no Opposition.*

*This Sermon was a Word fitly spoken, with Application to the Idol at that Time [Prelacy] which at this Time hath the Ascendant. It not only proves Prelacy an Idol of the Understanding; but faithfully warns all the LORD's People to hasten their Escape from that sinful Course, lest they share in the Plagues of Idolatry, Jer. 15. 6. Rev. 18. 4.*

*As the holy Scriptures, and this Sermon do condemn Prelacy; so these Land were solemnly sworn to extirpet Prelacy, and all Superstition, &c. we need therefore, by this, or the like Sermon, to be put*



*in mind of our Engagements to, and horrid Breach of Covenant with GOD, which we have so slighted that God, in holy Justice, has made our Sin our Punishment.*

*This Sermon by necessary Consequence, condemns the hateful Neutrality, and conniving at Prelacy in the Ministers of Scotland at this Day. 'Tis lamentable that they should so tamely stoop to all the Demands of the Propagators of Prelacy. But that I may no longer detain you from what this bold Ambassador of Christ hath, according to his Commission declared, I bid you Adieu.*

## *Advertisement.*

**T**HE foregoing Preface was prefix'd to a former Edition of this Sermon, printed 1713. And the Design of Reprinting the same at this Time is for the Conviction and Reclaiming of those in this Church, who, contrary to our avow'd Principles which we are solemnly sworn to, have followed after, and countenanced Mr *George Whitefield*, who openly professes himself to be of the Communion of the Church of *England*: And also as a reasonable and necessary Warning to the Professors of the Reformation in *Scotland* against the Evil and Danger of *Prelacy*, whereunto the present Latitudinarian Scheme of Principles introduc'd by the said Mr. *Whitefield*, seem preparatory; and likewise as a standing Declaration and publick Testimony against the same.

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*Pre-  
lacy an Idol, and Prelates Idolaters: All Pre-  
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A

## S E R M O N

O N

Hosea 1. 2. 2, 3, 4, 5.

1. *Say ye unto your Brethren Ammi, and to your Sisters Ruhamah. 2. Plead with your Mother, plead; for she is not my Wife, neither am I her Husband, let her therefore put away her Whoredoms out of her Sight, and her Adulteries from between her Breasts, &c.*

**I**T is a wonderful Thing, that the LORD should by his Spirit strive so long, and yet not give up with a People, so wicked as this People was; this People had corrupted the Worship of GOD, had turned out all the LORD's honest Servants, and set debauch'd

bauch'd wicked Men of their own Stamp in their Rooms, persecuted every truly Godly Man, and given themselves up to all manner of Sins, both against the first and second Table, and had rejected the Law of GOD, and continued obstinate against all the Means, by which the LORD used to reclaim them: And now when it might been expected, that the LORD should have given up with them, and utterly destroyed them; he not only spar'd them, *nor stirred up all his Wrath*, but continued to send Prophet after Prophet, and Messengers in Abundance, to testify against them; and in this, *left not himself without a Witness*, 2 Chron. 36. 14, 15, 16. So that there were few Places of the Land, that were left in the dark. We see this wonder continued even with ourselves; few Places in the Land, but GOD hath some way or other, given so much Light, as shall leave Folk without Excuse, in the Day of their Compt and Reckoning with GOD; and this Country of *Murray* more than others; so that it shall be more tollerable in the Day of Judgment, for the Places, where there is not an honest Minister to be found, than for this Country; and tho' now, in a sort, it is exalted to Heaven, yet *shall it be brought down to Hell*, if the Gospel have not other Fruits among you, than yet it has had.

Here in the Words read, there are three Thing, *First, Ye have GOD's Controversy with this People*, and that is, *their corrupting of the Worship of God, or their Idolatry*. Secondly, *Ye have a Duty enjoined to the faithful honest Professors*



ers at that Time, that were indeed GOD's People, and had received Mercy (for so much do these Words, *Ammi, Ruhamah*, in the original signify) and that is, That they should plead with their Mother, that is, the apostate Body of the Church, both Rulers and People. Thirdly, There is something of Mercy, and Judgment coming in by Turns; Mercy, in that GOD should yet have them pleaded with, and that they were yet in Capacity, to do that which might make up their Breaches; Put away your Adulteries: And there is Judgment in this, That he disowned them as his People, that he would stay them with Thirst, and that he would not have Mercy on their Children, and reckoned them, as Children of Whoredom, *Hos. 2.* from the 1. ver. to the 14.

From the first I observe this Note, That the Professors of the visible Church, are much inclined to the sin of Idolatry, or corrupting of the Worship of GOD. Look to the Church before, and after the Flood, how soon did Idolatry creep in, and to how great a height did it come, and how Universal did it become, and how long did it continue! how did the Lord's own People in Egypt follow the idolatrous Courses of the Egyptians, *Ezek. 23. 3* and *20. 7*. There the Breasts were prest: Look alongs unto the Captivity, how readily did they corrupt the Worship of God; so that in *Elijah's* Time, he thought there was none that bowed not the Knee to Baal; and thus they continued, say the Lord what he pleased, till they were destroyed. Look after CHRIST's Time, and the Apostles Time, tho' something of it was in their own Time

Time of their Meats, Washings, and voluntary Worshipping of Angels, *Col. 3 23*. See how Religion was defiled with Mens Invention by degrees, till the Substance was lost at last and the great Antichrist got up. Let us but look among ourselves, what a great stir since the Reformation, about altering the Government of Christ's Church, and introducing of Ceremonies; and I will give you these five Reasons why People are so apt to corrupt the Worship of GOD,

1. Men desire to be Neighbour like, and the whole World is given up to this sin, by any other sin in the World: Hence says the *Jews*. *Give us a King after the manner of the Nations. Ezek. 20 32*. We will be as the Heathen, as the Families of the Countries to serve Wood, and Stone: This it was, that so much inclined the *Jews* before the Captivity, to this sin of Idolatry, the whole Land about them, did thus worship. Men naturally desire not to be singular: Why is Prelacy brought into the Church, and Officers, not of GOD's appointment thrust into GOD's House? 'Tis so in the Nations; so in *Pole, Spain, Italy*, and most of *France* and *Sweden*. Why do so many comply with this amongst us, and go to the Kirk and so bow down before the Golden Image, the King hath made? The Reason is, they see the Multitude, and Generality do so, and they will do as their Neighbours, and not follow a few despised Persons, but this in the Day of your Account will not do your

Turn

Turn to say, O Lord, *all my Neighbours round about, and all the great Folk went to the Church, and therefore I behoved to go.*

2. The second Ground is from wicked carnal Policy. Men see it their Interest, and conducing to their worldly Standing, to follow such a way, and therefore they will take it up. 1 King 12. 35. Ye may see this plainly in *Jeroboam*, who rebelled against the House of *Rehoboam*, he set up Worship that was not according to GOD's Will, changed the Officers of GOD's House, and the Place of Worship, and made a Feast according to his own Heart, which became a Snare to the House of *Israel* for ever, and a standing Quarrel between GOD and them for many hundred Years. Now what made him do this think I ye, was it any Zeal? no, but if (saith he) *the People go to Jerusalem to worship, then will their Hearts return to their own King, and I will be put from the Kingdom.* And therefore it is too much for you to go up to *Jerusalem, here be thy Gods*, quoth he. And thus by corrupting the Worship of GOD, he thought to secure the Kingdom to himself: How comes that our Kings are so great Sticklers for *Prelacy*, for this Government of Man's invention? Why, the Cause is plain, it is the King that hath the Nomination of them, gives them their Charters and Rents, and when he has any Thing ado in Parliament against the Countrey, he is sure of fourteen Votes from his Creatures, who will sacrifice

Honour, and Conscience, and all to him: The *Curats* are countenanced by the Nobles, it's first the King's Will, and they will get leave to drink, curse, swear, and Whore, and never be reprov'd: They were reprov'd and made odious to be strict Presbyterians, and liable to the Censures of the Church; and why do so many moderate Men, who in their Consciences, know the *Curates* to be but naughty graceless Men, hear them, and so countenance them? but this, it's the way to get to Court, and to secure their Interests.

3dly, Men are so much given to corrupt the Worship of GOD, by adding their own Inventions, in respect of some Appearance of Conveniency, that is in these ways, above what they can see in the Ways of GOD: GOD had tyed the People to worship at the Door of the Tabernacle at *Jerusalem*; quoth *Jeroboam*, This is inconvenient, for such Multitudes of People, to go so far three times every Year, and besides very hazardous; for our ill Neighbours, that are round about us may come to our Houses, when we are at *Jerusalem*, and kill our Wives and Bairns, and rob our Houses, and possess themselves of them, and therefore will we worship GOD nearer hand, with a great dale more Conveniency, and less Hazard: Hence, the Will-worship, and carnal Inventions of the *Primitive Times*, had a shew of Wisdom, and of Humility, *Col. 2. 23.* and proud Men will not partake of the Sacrament of the LORD's  
Sup-



Supper in that Posture CHRIST did, viz. sitting or lying, but will kneel. Why so? It is not reverent to sit, while we are receiving so great a Blessing; this looks, and favours more of Humility: and hence I have heard some Reason for *Prelacy* against the Presbyterian Government, thus, *What foolish unjustifiable a Thing is it, that a young rash Man's Vote should signify as much in a Synod or Presbytery, as the Vote of the gravest, godliest and the most judicious Person in the Church?* Indeed I confess, such Ministers as now are in the Church, it were a Pity, their Vote should signify any Thing at all in the Church; and they have need of some grave Rulers; but did Men choise Persons qualified according to GOD's Word, they might be able to give a Vote.

4thly, *Men are apt to corrupt God's Worship, by their Inventions, from the Pride of their Hearts, and the Love that they have to these Inventions:* It's no more natural to the Drunkard, to lust after his Cups, nor the unclean Person, to lust after his Whore, nor to the Worldling after his Profit and Advantage, than 'tis for a carnal Heart, to have some Brat of its own, foisted into the Worship of GOD; and hence they are said to be mad after their Idols, and inflamed with them, Dan. 3. Nebuchadnezzar will have the graven Image to be worshipped, under the Pain of burning quick: Why? *It was the Image that the King set up:* And hence we are deav'd with the



Noise of his Majesty's Government: *Every Man loves to serve GOD after his own Way.*

5thly. *The Simplicity of the Gospel doth not suit, nor bulk with a carnal gross Conception,* 2 Cor. II 3. *Why did the World chuse to worship GOD by Images first?* Here was it, They could not in their Understandings apprehend an Infinit, and invisible Godhead; their Minds wavered, and were swallowed up and lost here; and therefore to fix their Understandings, and to have something that would bulk to the carnal Eye, that's much taken up with a sensible Religion; they would make an Image of this GOD, that by worshipping of it, they might hereby worship the true GOD: And hence also a World of Ceremonies are crept in the Worship of GOD: Some thing of Decency and Beauty; 'tis a glorious Thing to hear the Sound of Organs, to see the Reverend *Prelates* in their long white Sleeves; and hence we hear tell of so many Heathens profelyted to the *Popish* Religion: Why, the poor Creatures were much taken up in their carnal Fancies, with these outward Shows, and Trinkets. 'Tis not bulksome in the Eye of carnal Reason, to see the Ambassadors of CHRIST with equal Power, having a small Livelyhood, of seven or eight hundred Merks a Year: This Simplicity of the Gospel is despised; and therefore a Lordly Pompuous Government, with outward Glory, of forty or fifty Thousand Merks

Merks a Year, and taking Place of all the Subjects of the Kingdom: *O that's brave!*

*Use.* Is it so, *That Idolatry, or corrupting of the Worship of GOD, is a Sin to which Man's Nature is very prone and inclined?* Then it gives us Ground to fear that there is more Idolatry, and of this Sin among us, than we are well aware of, and that this *Prelacy* draws deeper now at this Time than we dream.

Remember, there is no Sin hath prevailed in all Ages so much, and among so many Multitudes, as this Sin; it would be a rare Thing, if it were not so now among us at this Time: Let all the LORD's People take heed to this, Beloved, I do confess, this (I think) more concerns you, than many of you think: There are many, who will confess, *There hath been great Apostacy in the Land, and there is much Wickedness broke out, and the People of GOD themselves, to have lost much of their first Love; but the Sin of Idolatry to be amongst them!* they think, *It is not come to that yet: The Prelate is indeed an Officer of Man's Invention; and the Curats are little worth as to their Persons: And some will go the Length to say, They ought to be discountenanced; but they cannot suffer, nor believe, That the Charge should be summed up so far, as to make all, that any way complies with them, and receives the Ordinances at their Hands, to be guilty of Idolatry: The Ordinances are yet pure; and ye think it, a far other Case with you, than*  
it

*it was with the People of the Jews, when they worshipped Baal.*

Beloved, I confess, tho' these many Years I have had so much Conviction, and Light, as to refrain from hearing of the *Curats*, yet till of late did I never think, that this Sin did draw so deep, as now the Lord hath convinced me it doth; I must ingenuously, acknowledge and declare, that within these few Months, such a prevailing Light from the Scripture hath shined upon me, as to that Matter that I do indeed believe the Lord to be as much offended, at our contemning the *Curats* by hearing of them, as at the worshipping of the Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*. I love not to debate much, I would have you to take these seven Considerations to Heart. First, let us but compare our Case with the Case of the visible Church of the *Jews* at this Time, when this Prophet spake to them. It's well known, that this Whoredom, this Idolatry, he speaks of, was the Change that *Jeroboam* made in GOD's Worship; where ye have a fourfold Corruption. *First*, In that he did worship the Invisible GOD by Images, two Calves, which he caused set up. *Secondly*, That he did put out the *Levites*, who only were allowed by GOD, to serve in the Priest's Office, and did set up the basest of the People to minister in their stead, as our Rulers are now doing. *Thirdly*, That he did change the Place of Worship, from *Jerusalem*, where GOD appointed it, to *Dan*, and *Bethel*, and other high

high Places and Groves. *Fourthly*, That he appointed a Feast of his own Invention like unto the Feast of the Lord, all which ye have in the latter Part of 12. *Chap. 1 Kings*. Let us look to our selves, and see whether we have not likewise corrupted the Service of GOD, have we not set up an Officer in GOD's Houſe, to continue there, which CHRIST never ſettled nor appointed ; and doth not all Ordinances flow, principally from his Authority ; have we not like *Jeroboam* thrust out the faithful Servants of CHRIST out of Doors, and taken the Keys from them, and given them to a Sort of People, that CHRIST discharged to speak of his Covenant, or open their Mouths, as base every Whit as these, *Jeroboam* made Priests unto the Lord, Men of no Conscience, nor Honour, but will comply with every Thing wherein Gain is to be had ; is there not a Feast Day, and holy to be kept yearly as the Sabbath is ; and is not that a profitable Way of expounding of Scripture, commended to us, by the Examples of God's Prophets and Servants of Old, now discharged by Law, and taken away from God's Worship ; and are there not Things added as necessary Parts of Worship, that God never burdened his People with ; such as singing of the Doxology, repeating of the *Creed*, and Lord's Prayer, and are not all these, Men's inventions ; and if not Idols of the Hands, yet Idols and Works of the Understanding ; and is not the Worship of GOD thereby mixt  
and



and defiled; and what did all *Jeroboam's* Sin amount to, but this the defiling of the Worship of GOD with Man's Inventions; Secondly, That such as did worship Images in all Ages, did not sin, as to the Object of Worship; that is; that they did not ultimately intend the Worship to the Image, but unto the true GOD, that these Images, did represent, but did sin in the Manner of Worship: The first Command did indeed direct us as to the Object of Worship, or shew us whom we should worship. The second Command doth direct and command the right Manner of worshipping that Object, and doth forbid the worshipping of him any other Way than what is appointed by himself, in his Word, and doth forbid to worship him by Images, because the way of Worship, was the ordinary Way by which Men did corrupt the Worship of GOD at that Time, and therefore all other Ways of corrupting the Worship, are by that forbidden, and condemned; and hence ye find, that the Heathens when challenged for directing their Worship to Images, did reply, it was not Wood, nor Stone that they did worship, but the Invisible GOD, represented by that; and so did the idolatrous *Jews* defend themselves, *To Morrow is a Sacrifice unto the LORD. Exod. 32.* And when *Jeroboam* set up the Calves, he said *these be thy GODS which brought thee out of Egypt;* nor can any imagine, they were so gross, as to think these Calves, which the King caused

make



make, did bring them out of *Egypt* : and in *Ezra's* Time, the idolatrous *Jews* professed, they worshipped and sacrificed to the same GOD that *Ezra* did worship ; and to this Day the *Papists* deny, that they worship the Image it self, but those whom the Images represent. So its clear, their Sin was worshipping the true GOD in an unlawful Way, or else the first and second Command were all one ; if therefore we shall worship GOD in a Way not appointed in his Word, we are guilty as well as they ; and therefore if it will not loose you, from the Charge of Idolatry, to say, we worship the true GOD, for so they did pretend : It's true, the Spirit of God says, it was to Devils, they sacrificed, but this says only what Esteem God had of this worshipping of him, that he would think of it, that he would reckon it as Sacrifice to the Devil, whatever they thought ; for this is plain, *Isa.* 66. It's said, *he that killeth an Ox, is as if he had slain a Man* : Now certainly these Idolaters did not, when they had killed an Ox slay a Man, much less thought it, but the Lord, in Point of Guilt thought it all alike ; and for my Part I fear that many, who devoutely go to the Church, and hear the *Curats*, thinking that they honour God thereby, will be reckoned, to worship the Devil.

3dly, *That there are Idols of the Understanding, as well as Idols of the Hand, Hos.* 13

2. That is, That not only doth the Workman's Hand frame an Image by which he

worships GOD, and in which he approaches unto GOD; but likewise, the idolatrous proud Mind, when it forgeth Ways and Inventions in the Service of GOD, to beautifie it, or *as more convenient*, it makes an Idol; and therefore, *that humane Invention*, of a constant, fixt ordinary Officer in the House of GOD, *with a Lordly Power above his Brethren*, is an Idol; tho' *not of the Hand, yet of the Mind and Understanding*, out of which it is forged; and so is any other *Invention* of Man in GOD's Service: And thus all humane *Inventions*, corrupting the Worship of GOD, are all named by the Name of *Images*, in the second Command: It matters not then, tho' ye do not worship GOD by the *Idol made with the Hands*, if ye worship him, by the *Idols made by the Understanding*: It was no great Matter, as to the Guilt of Idolatry, whether the *Idol* that was worshipped, was made by a *Smith*, or *Graver of Stone*, or *Silver*, *Gold*, or *whether it had the shape of a Man*, or a *Beast*, all was *Idolatry*; so it is no Matter, if ye worship GOD, by an unlawful Mean, or Idol, or Invention, whether that be the Work of the *Hand*, or of the *Understanding*, it is *Idolatry*.

4thly, Consider, That not only such, who did set up, invent and authorize Idolatry, or an unlawful Way of Worship, were guilty of *Idolatry*; but such as in Obedience to that Command and Authority, did go alongs and comply with that Worship, whether Officers or common People: *Nebuchadnezzar* only,  
nor

nor *Feroboam* only did sin, in setting up the golden Image, or the two Calves; but all such, as either for Fear, or any other End, did worship the golden Image, or go to *Dan* and *Bethel*, and sacrifice, were in like Manner guilty thereof: And therefore, are the King and Rulers, and Bishops and Curats not only guilty of *Idolatry*, but all, who join with them, in the unlawful Worship, which proceeds from that unlawful Authority, which is the *Idol* of Man's Understanding, and the *Dagon*, that is set up instead of the *Ark* of GOD, are likewise guilty.

5thly, Consider, That our coming to GOD's House, with the Body of the People, to hear GOD's Word, is not only a Mean of *Edification*, but a *Matterial Act of Worship*, whereby we express some Part of our Homage to him; and therefore if there be *Idolatry*, or any Thing of *humane Invention* in that, as the Curate's Authority, by which he preaches, is, we worship GOD by *Idols*; our Worship is corrupted, as well as when we set up an *external Image* before us, when we pray and direct our Worship to that.

6thly, That however in the Times of Ignorance, GOD according to his long suffering Goodness, *did wink at* Sins of Worship, of Practice, yea, and at Errors in Doctrine too; yet when the LORD was pleased, to declare his Mind more clearly, as to these Things, and to stir up his Servants, to testify against them, and so concern'd himself by his Providence,



dence, they come under another Consideration, and are no way to be tollerated: The Sin of Idolatry was a Sin, that *Rachel* a godly Woman, lived in for a while: How many of the Patriarchs and the godly King's lived in *Polygamy*, and had Concubines? When the *Israelites* lived in *Egypt*, they had Idols; yet were suffered and born with, till GOD declared his Mind more fully against that Sin, and then nothing but Severity. We would not now count them Christians, nor converse with a Man of such Ways, if a Man, even after Christ came in the Flesh, believed on a *Messiah*, tho' he was not perswaded, that this *Messiah* was come already, he might be saved; but when the LORD by his Word and Works declared, That he was already come, then *except ye believe, that I am he, ye cannot have Life in you*, *Job. 2 Epistle*, *Who is the Antichrist, but he that denieth a Messiah, but he that denieth, he is come in the Flesh already?* This was the Truth of the Times: Ye see that the *Jews*, that were first brought to receive the Gospel, did stick to many of the old Ceremonies, and which by Christ his coming and Resurrection, were indeed really abrogated; such as Circumcision, and several Washings, and Meats: How tenderly the Apostle dealeth himself with them, and how careful he is to have others carry fair to them; but look again, where he speaks of the same Things, at other Times, and to other Persons, as to the *Corinthians*, and *Galatians*, what

what Severity doth ne use? Now, the Reason is, these to whom he used Severity, were a People that had received much Light, that had casten off these Ceremonies; and therefore to take them up again, was very intollerable in them; but these to whom he is so favourable, were Persons, that never had casten them off, but were all their Days bred with them. and never knew so clearly their christian Liberty: And therefore tho' I have an Abundance of Charity, to the godly Bishops in the primitive Times, and to many Bishops living in other Places, and might go a great Length with them, in Respect the Lord had not cleared that Matter; yet here in Scotland, we cannot so much, as part with a Hoof in that Matter; *But to stand to the Liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free, and not be again entangled, with the Yoke of Bondage.*

7thly, And lastly consider, *That these Things, wherein the Servants of GOD did shew so much Zeal, and the LORD was so severe against, were in themselves, and as they did appear to humane Reason, but of small Moment:* What was the great Quarrel all alongst from Fero-boam's Time, till the Captivity, but the Place of Worship? what a small Thing did Daniel choose suffering for? *Not a Hoof*, quoth Moses: How did the Apostles contend against Circumcision, against the Observation of Days, and might not the People say, as ye do now, *Why does Moses, and the Prophets, and Apostles*  
make



*make such a Stir about so small a Matter? we worship the true GOD, and have the Substance of Religion, and why should there be a Fire raised in the Church, for the Ceremony of the Place of Worship? And do ye not say the same many of you, What a Work is here for Government: what great Matter is it, whether the Government be Presbyterial or Episcopal, if I live a good Life? I hope it will not be ask'd at me, at the Day of Judgment, Whether was I Presbyterian, or Episcopal? We have the true Religion, and sound Doctrine preached; and why should Folk be so contentious, as to strive for Circumstances. Well Sirs, look ye on it, as ye will, the LORD looks on it otherwise; and know it, however ye think, It shall not be asked, what Judgment ye were of, and what Party ye took by the Hand: Know it, thou art, and shall be deceived: Many (I question not) never dream'd, that ever they should be questioned anent that Place they worshipped at; so they worshipped the true GOD, with a sincere Heart, and good Mind; for that was, so small a Matter, that they did not think it fit to disobey Authority, or separate from the Church, or expose themselves to suffering for.*

*Observ. 2. That the Sin of Idolatry, or corrupting of God's Worship, is a very great Sin in the Sight of God, and one of the greatest Sins, that a People can be guilty of, however small the Matter may seem to some. And this appears, first, by the Names it gets in Scripture: It's called Whoredom, Idolatry or Adultery; ye see, 'tis here*

were called *Whoredom* and *Adultery*: Now ye know the Sin of Adultry is a very odious Sin. But why is the Corruption of Worship called by the Name of *Adultery*, or *Whoredom* in the Scripture, so frequently as in *Jeremiah*, *Ezekiel*, and in this Prophecy: The Reason I conceive is this, that as Adultery doth alienate the Mind of the Adulteress from her Husband, so doth the Corruption of the Worship alienate the Mind, very strangely from GOD; call'd therefore a departing from Him: O what Apostacy hath followed this Idol of *Prelacy*! and what Distance from GOD! And then again, in regard of the fervent Lustings, that the Idolaters have to their Idols, as the Adulterer hath after the Adulteress: O how zealous are the *Prelates*, and Persecuters for Submission to them! what severity against *Non-conformists*! what Punishments for a Ceremony, that are of all Men most lax and loose, as to other Things, whose Zeal only appears in their Superstition; and hence, to be *mad*, and *inflam'd with their Idols*. Lastly, I suppose 'tis called *Whoredom* and *Adultery*, in respect, that as Adultery is the directest Breach of the Marriage Covenant; so when Men corrupt the Worship of GOD, they in this cast off GOD as their Husband, and make their Hearts, or Men, or the Wills of Men their God: Hence, *Put away thine adulteries from between thy Breasts, or else, I will be no Husband to thee*. This Rebellion likewise called *Witchcraft*, in respect of the

the strong and wonderful secret Destruction of the Soul: Is it not Matter of astonishing Wonder, that these, who follow *Prelacy*, tho' formerly known to be devout Men and sober, how are they bewitched with it, to break out so universally, into gross Evils! 'Tis said *Baalam* used his Enchantments; do ye think these were the Charms the Devil used him with, or taught him? it is not like he would seek GOD in these; 'tis his superstitious Way of worshipping, and enquiring of GOD, in his own ceremonious Way, sometimes in this Place, and sometimes in the other, and his Multitude of Altars, and Conceits; however these Names given to it shows, it was a great Sin.

2. A second Thing, that demonstrates the exceeding great Sinfulness of Idolatry, is the sad and woful Concomitants and Consequents of it; for we never see the Worship of GOD corrupted in a Place, but all manner of Wick- edness breaks in with it. Thir idolatrous *Jews* did not only corrupt the Worship, but did break out into Murders, Lying, Ignorance, Oppression and many other Sins; and look but to ourselves, no sooner was *Prelacy* set up, and the Government corrupted, but as if the bottomless Pit had been immediately opened, out did there flow such a Flood of Prophanity, and Ungodliness with it, thorow the whole Land, and it was ever so; Ungodliness and Prophanity follow *Prelacy*, as the Shadow doth the Body.

3dly, The sad Judgments and outward Evils, that this Sin did bring on, do abundantly manifest the Sinfulness of it: Ye see how it is threatned here, *That unless she would put her Adulteries from between her Breasts, that he would be no Husband to her, that he would strip her naked, and slay her Children, and no more acknowledge them, as his Children, but as so many Bastards, Children of Whoredom.* I fear all the Bairns that are baptized by the Curats, GOD reckons them, as Children of Whoredom; we see some of the sad Effects of our Idolatry already; but when the *Sword, Famine or Pestilence* will rage in this Land, then shall ye say, *Wo to Idols, Wo is me that ever I heard a Curate.*

Fourthly, The Evil of it appears in this, that the Lord doth so much concern himself in it, in witnessing against it, was not this the great Quarrel that the Lord did plead uninterruptedly, for for some hundreds of Years against his People, the High Places? And is not this the capital Sin that he most cries out against, even where there were other Sins? And have not the Labours, Lives, and Fortunes of many of his precious People been war'd to destroy this Prelacy? and did all these Worthies fight, and labour, to die



for nothing? Was the Lord only taken up with a Notion, these fourscore Years bygone? There are some Folk looks on these Things, as Matters of so small concernment, that they think God, and all his gracious Servants Fools, that ever did make such a work, about it, as they have done, but Wisdom is justified of her Children.

*Quest.* But what makes it so great an Evil? I answer, because when the Worship of GOD is corrupted, the Authority of God himself is cast off, when we mix our own Inventions in the Worship of GOD, or obtrude them upon others; 'tis a making of ourselves GOD, and invading the Royal Prerogative of CHRIST, whose it is only to prescribe Laws to his Church, and there is but one Law-giver, this is clear, *1 Sam. 12.* when the People were wearied with that Form of Civil Policy, GOD, for many Years had given, and which he judged most suitable for them, and desired a King after the Manner of the Nations, the Lord tells *Samuel* be not thou troubled, because that thou, or thy Sons are casten off, they have not casten thee off, but me saith the Lord: why so? because they were weary of that Government, he had shaped out for them, and would be  
their



their own Carvers, and thus rejected GOD: and if in Civil Government the Lord takes it ill, that his Government is rejected, shall he not much more, who is King of his Church, take it ill, and count himself rejected if his Laws be dispensed with, and that Government which in his Word he hath settled, and carved out, as most convenient to his Church, be rejected, and another of Man's Invention, be set up in its stead? What a great Invasion of the Royal Prerogative and Breach of the Privileges of Parliament is it, if the People, or inferior Sheriffs or Judges, shall rule their Shires, by other Laws, and Customs, than the Laws of the Kingdom already established; Christ's Crown will be found too heavy (as one saith well) for any mortal Man to wear.

Use, See hence what Cause there is of deep Humiliation, for this Sin of Idolatry, for changing Christ's Government, and setting another Form, and other Officers, whom Christ hath not appointed in his House, and casting out these Servants, to whom Christ entrusted the Keys of his House: Hear this, ye that willingly follow the Commandment, that bow the knee to *Baal*, by your

Compliance, and hearing of the Idol Shepherds, remember your Sin is the Sin of Idolatry, and this is as Witchcraft, ye have casten off the Laws of Christ, and ye are as guilty in the Sight of GOD, as these who did worship at *Dan*, and *Bethel*, let us hear your Objections.

Object. 1. *The most ye can say is, That the Government is corrupted; this says nothing to the Worship; 'tis extrinsick to it.* I answer *Jeroboam's* Idolatry, was not only in that he worshiped the Calves, but in that he set other Governours and Ministers, and Priests to minister and to offer Sacrifice, than the LORD appointed, and so now, other Officers are set up, which the LORD hath not approved: GOD never allowed a lordly Prelate, as Officer in his Church, nor a perjured scandalous Person to be a Minister.

*Secondly,* If the Government of the Church be corrupted, the Worship of GOD cannot be pure, but likewise corrupted; for where there is an unlawful Government, there the Governors are unlawful, and if the Governors be unlawful, there the Acts of preaching, which issue from them, and in which they worship God, must likewise be unlawful

unlawful and corrupted; for pure Worship requires, that one in lawful Authority dispense it, and officiate in it.

*Thirdly*, 'Tis indifferent whether it be the Worship, or Government that is corrupted: I say the Laws of CHRIST are violated, the Command of GOD reaches to Government, as well as to Worship, and who shall change or add to the one, invades the Prerogative of Christ, as well as he, who shall add to, or change the other: The Government of Christ's Church is that which concerns the Service of GOD, and we make Idols in Government as well as in Worship: 'Tis impossible to have pure Worship, where there is impure Government; and unlawful Ministers cannot preach lawfully.

*Object. 2.* 'Tis but a small Matter, that there is a Corruption in, we cannot think it will draw so deep as Idolatry or Severe, or divide from the Church for such small Matters, we see no Warrant for it: Must we be call'd Corrupters of the Worship, and Idolaters, and as guilty as these, who worshipped the Calves of Dan and Bethel, if we but hear a Curate?

*Ans. 1.* No Sin is little, and nothing where in GOD's Honour is concerned should

should be thought small, the least *Job* of which is of more Value, than Heaven and Earth, *Matth. 5 18*. Every Sin is infinite in regard of its Object, the least Sin is more than the greatest Suffering.

*Secondly*, GOD hath stood much upon small Matters: Ye say, 'Tis but a small Matter, what Government be in the Church; and was it not a smaller Matter, where the Worship of GOD should be performed, might not such as worshipped at *Dan* and *Bethel*, say to the Prophets and People, that did so vehemently condemn that Matter, *Why stand ye upon so small a Matter, seeing we worship one, and the same GOD, shall the Circumstance of the Place make such a Stir?* When *Moses* said to *Pharaoh*, *Not a Hoof*, might not the rest of the People said, *Moses*, ye are too strict, the King offers a very good Bargain, we and our Wives, and our Children, and some of our Substance may go away, and for a whine Kine, or Oxen, or Horses, better not to stand on that, that endangers the whole Body of the People of GOD, in an endless cruel Slavery? And therefore tho' these Things appear small to you, yet we see, GOD looks not so upon them.

*Thirdly*,



*Thirdly*, Tho' the Sin of *Prelacy* might be thought small in itself, and of little Regard in some Places, and at some Times, yet not so now: Consider *Prelacy*, as it is circumstanced, and ye will find it no small Thing; *Prelacy* is now clearly discovered to be a Sin, 'tis a Sin against Light; and therefore tho' it were little, yet being against Light, this makes it great; *Prelacy* and the Curates are now generally disowned by all the Godly in the Land; the LORD hath so far appeared against *Prelacy*, that since the Reformation hath been, that for which *Michael* and his Angels hath foughten, against the *Dragon* and his Angels; against which the LORD's people have war'd and spent their Time, Labours, Estates, and many thousand of their Lives, to get this Plant rooted out; and after all this, is it so small a Matter to comply with? and hath not the LORD, so dreadfully witnessed against this Weed, that all who adhere to it, are so cursed, that they carry the Mark of Hell upon them; a few yet persecuting, devote, painted Tombs excepted.

*Fourthly*, Compliance with the Curates may seem small, but it is an Introduction

duction, to greater Matters, if Man be tollerated to set up an Officer in GOD's House, of his own Invention, and paid and add to the Worship, where will he list, let this small Leak be, and what Matters may come in, came not the great Antichrist in at this Crivese?

*Object. 3. Or ye will say, The Reason why the LORD was so offended with the high Places, was, because the Place of Worship was clearly, and particularly determined by GOD in his Word, it was a plain Case; not so the Matter of Government, which is more ambiguous to some.*

*Ans.* Yet the Godly do generally much ways doubt of it; yea, we may say, and can prove it, That the Government of CHRIST's Church is as particularly determined in the Word of GOD, as the Place of Worship was under the Old Testament: If this seem strange to you, know further, That these who joined the Service of Baal, and went to Dan and Bethel to worship, did as much that Time question, whether the Place of Worship was determined, as ye do the Government, whether it be determined; and neither Priests nor People would ever acknowledge, that in going to Dan and Bethel to worship, they did

transgress any expresse Command: It's true the Prophets, and Faithful of the Land were fully and truly perswaded of the contrary; and had Ground for so going likewise; and so are the LORD's People (some of which, yet hear the Curates) perswaded of the Unlawfulness of Prelacy, and have as real Grounds for it, as others had of Old. Ye say still *That of the Place of Worship was clear, and we wonder how any could be in the dark as to that:* And we wonder as much, how we can be in the dark as to the Government; so that the Case is still the same, and were you living at that Time, when the Vorship was corrupted, ye would then as much have debated, for the Indifference of the Place of Worship, as ye can do, for the Indifference of the Government.

Object. 4. *We cannot think it, so dangerous a Business, as you say; because there were many very pious Men, that were Bishops, and if it were such an Evil, I think such pious and holy Men would never have accepted the Charge.*

I answer, It doth not follow: I grant indeed there were many pious and godly Men, who were Bishops, but that was in the Times of Ignorance: There were

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many pious and godly Persons, that married two Wives that were Concubines; it will not follow therefore, That now to have many Wives, is a small Thing: 'There were Disciples, *that heard not so much as of the Holy Ghost*, and were baptized; will ye call such Ignorants Disciples now? *Paul* did esteem that such among the *Romans*, and profelyted *Jews*, who *were weak, and observed Days, and were circumcised, were to be born with, and not to be censured, seeing they did it unto the LORD*: Did he therefore contradict himself, or judge it a small Thing in the *Galatians* and *Corinthians*, when he said to them, *that observed Days and Years, I fear my Travel is in vain*? What may be tollerable, and consistent with Grace in some Persons, and at some Times, may be very inconsistent with it in other Persons, and at another Time.

Object. 5. *But all the Curates are not so wickèd, as ye call them, some of them are very sober, and given to no Vice, and are painful and able, and well gifted, and shall we not hear them?* I answer, tho' I grant this, but of very few of them, yet what follows; I question not, but some of *Baal's* Priest's were more devote than others, and of the *Pharisees*, which persecuted *Christ*



Christ, some were more devote than others, in so much that they were not far from the Kingdom of GOD; and this Day among the Papists, tho' generally their Munks be ignorant, proud, carnal and unclean, and more taken up with State Matters, than their Books; yet are there some, who are very learned and devote, take much Pains in their own Way: It's wonderful, where it is said in some Chapter in *Acts*, That certain devote Women persecuted Paul; *Acts* 13. 50. How were they devote, when they were such Persecutors? They had a moral outward Devotion, in their own Way; and tho' some of the Curates be more sober than others, and as touching the Law blameless; what doth that prove, and what tho' there were no more to object against them, but this, their Idolatry, their Perjury, their dividing from the People of GOD, were not this enough?

Object. 6th, But the Curates preach good and sound Doctrine, and therefore we may hear them. I answer, I question not, but the Priests, and Prophets of *Dan* and *Bel* and of *Baal*, and the Scribes, and Pharisees, were found in every Truth except these which were debated in the Times; in all Ages they taught one GOD, who

was to be loved, and honoured, tho' they grossly erred, as to these Truths which at that Time fell under Debate: The Curates are found in every Point, except as to the Point of Church Government, the Obligation of the Covenant: Look therefore, as it was not lawful to countenance the Priests of *Dan* and *Bethel*, nor the Scribes and Pharisees, tho' they preached sound Doctrine, as to many Points of Religion, so no more the Curates; the controverted Truths of the Time, are the greatest.

Object. 7th, *We are but Passives, tho' this Charge against the Curates were all proven, yet it concerns us nothing: We acknowledge them indeed guilty, who set them up.*

Answer, Look as *Jeroboam*, who set up the Calves at *Bethel*, was not only guilty, but all these who worshipped, in that prohibited Place of Worship; So not only are our Rulers guilty, but all who willingly follow the Commandment, and comply by Subjection, to the Commands of these who set up an unlawful Worship.

Object. 8th. *But what shall we do, we can bear no others, shall we stay at home, on the Sabbath Days?* I answer, First, Better spend the Time so,

, as the Lord will help you, than to go to an idolatrous corrupted Worship, and thereby establish Prelacy. Secondly, GOD hath not left himself without a Witness in this. few Places of the Land but, by exposing your selves to Suffering, and walking, or riding a few Miles, ye may have the Occasion of hearing an honest Minister. Thirdly, Might not the idolatrous *Jews* say the same Things in *Jeroboam's* Time, if we go not to *Dan* and *Bethel*, there is no other Place of Worship that we can go to without Hazard, and therefore better Sacrifice here, tho' not in all Things as we would desire, than to want Sacrifice altogether, or be destroyed by Authority; This will not do: Do rather as the faithful at that Time, that upon all Hazard ventured to go to *Jerusalem*, where the true Worship was settled.

Use second, May serve to vindicate the Practices of GOD's People in these Lands, who will not hear the Curates, that seem nice, and too strict in this Point, *Oh they dare not, they look upon as it is, &c.* Indeed Idolatry, and as to the going to *Bethel* and *Gilgal*, they look upon going to Church, as no less than the worshipping

shipping of the Calves, these Matters which ye say, ye would not lay the Stress of your Suffering upon, are greater Matters than ye suppose.

Observe *3dly*, Its the Duty of the Lord's People who have obtained Mercy of God, to be faithful and straight, to plead with the Body of the apostate Church in which they are, plead with your Mother plead, that is, strive with her, to take her from her corrupt Courses. Question, *By what Means should we plead?* Answer, By shewing, and convincing her the Evil of her Ways, both publicly and privately, to demonstrate to her, her sinful Courses, *Ezek. 20. 2. Shew the House of Israel her Transgressions*, if it might be had, there should be a publick Testimony for this Effect, but if this cannot be had, let every faithful Society do something in Order to this, many know not the Sinfulness of their Courses, or the great Evil in them, let it be your Work to convince such. *2dly*, By exhorting of her, that is by Suasion, pressing our Neighbours and these whom we may have Occasion, to converse with; not to go alongs with the Courses of the Times, but in Time to come out of



*Babylon.* 3dly, By denouncing of the Wrath of GOD against the Courses of the Times, not only by convincing them of their Sinfulness, but also of their Error. 4thly, By a contrary Practice, and withdrawing from all that follow the course of defecting, this is a pleading, 'tis Folly to talk and reason with Men, if the wonted Fellowship be continued. We give you three or four Rules in your pleading.

*First,* Be constant in your pleading, let not one Testimony, one Exhortation satisfy you, but continue *with much long suffering* till ye see nothing will do, but withdrawing and upgiving.

*Secondly,* Plead with Love, and especially remembering she is your Mother, and that these whom ye plead with, are Members of the same Body, however they be corrupt, 2. *Timothy* 2. 25. *in meekness, instructing them that oppose themselves.*

*Thirdly,* Plead plainly and freely, so as they may know what ye would be at, let not the Trumpet give an uncertain sound, but declare to the House of Jacob their Transgressions.

*Fourthly,* Plead practically, plead indeed, as well as in word, let your Conversation,

versation, keeping a Distance with all that is corrupted, be a living Testimony against the Times Corruptions.

Quest. *Why should we plead with our Mother in a Time of Defection?* Ans. First, for the End (if possible) to get some drawn out of the Snare of the Devil, and the faithful Endeavours of God's People, are not always in vain as to this, this is the End of pleading here, that she may put away her Adulteries from between her Breasts, and so let us now plead with the Apostate Church, Guides and others, it may be, some may be gain'd. 2dly, To glorify GOD, and keep up the Remembrance of his Truth; if we can do no Good to others; yet we shall be Witnesses for the Lord, and keep the Remembrance of his Name, and Truths up, *Psa. 45. 17.* 3dly, We should plead for this Cause to make obstinate Folk inexcusable, in the Day of Judgment, and this our Warnings will do, if they do no more: They might have said, *Alas! Lord we knew no better, we never heard tell of the Sin of hearing the Curates, we were left in Darknes.* No faith the Lord, I gave you Light, it was not want of Light, I testify'd plainly against all these Courses, and therefore it was

was your Love to the World, and your Obstinacy, ye would not receive Instruction, and therefore depart. Oh Sirs, I tell you, Ministers shall be your greatest Plagues, and ye shall curse the Day, ye heard an honest Minister. *Matth. II. 24.*

Use 1<sup>st</sup>. of Reproof to such as will not plead at all in this Day of Detection, and there are five several Sorts of them. First, Such as in their Judgment condemn this Way of it, that think what have private Persons to judge of the Actions of the Church, that say I'll not meddle with these Things. I will refer them to God if I be wrong, for I am no Judge of these Things. Yet here Beloved, plead with your Mother *Ammi*, and *Ruhamah*, they are desired to plead with their Mother, and that without any Breach or their Mothers Privileges: 'Tis true, they should not assume to themselves, who are private Persons, a judicial Power over their Mother, but a Charitative Judgment they may. 2<sup>dly</sup>, Such as go along with their Mother in all her sinful Courses whatever their Judgment thinks. 3<sup>dly</sup>, Some satisfy themselves with their Opinions against the Corruptions of the Church, and go not to

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Church, yet testify not against them, they are passive, not active, they neither go along, not yet resist, nor plead. *4thly*, such as plead at least in Discourse against their Mother for all her Sins, save that which she is most guilty of, and for which we ought most to plead with her, her Adulteries: Ye will get many who will regrave the Abundance of Profanity that hath broken in, the Decay of Zeal, and the want of GOD's Presence (there is no Hazard that this Pleading exposes Folk unto) but never a Word against the *Idol* of Prelacy, corrupting of the Worship, &c. *5thly*, Such that join not in Worship, and yet goes along with them in other Things, I will get you many, who never heard a Curate, that keep Fellowship with Curates, and Apostates, eat and drink needlessly with them, are conformed in their Conversation to them; this is not right Pleading.

*Use. 2d.* See then, what is one great and peculiar Duty of the Times, even for the Faithful: *to plead with their Mother, to hold out the Sin and Evil of the present Apostacy; especially Compliance with Prelacy, and the Idolatry of the Worship, to all Persons, and when we*  
have



ave Occasion ; this ought to be our general Work.

Observ. 4th. *The Sin of Idolatry, and Corruption, as to the Worship of GOD, is Forerunner to, and brings on great Judgments, and sore Evils upon that Land, where it is corrupted ; as ye may see GOD threatens to divorce them, to slay them with thirst, to strip them naked.* I cannot stay long upon this, but I will tell you five, six Evils, that are like to come upon us here in Scotland, if we continue in our idolatry.

1st. GOD is like to forsake us altogether, and altogether to give up with us, will he be found in an idolatrous worship, against which he hath testified much: GOD hath already departed from many of us, in a great Measure; because this is no more laid to Heart; for this Cause he left *Shiloh*.

2. If GOD leave us, we are like to get worse Masters in his Place; we will not submit to Christ's Yoke, as like we may be given every one, to be oppressed by our King, and by one another  
ch. 11. 6.

3. We are like to lose the Gospel, and that there shall not (but in very few Places of the Land) be found any,

to mention the Name of the LORD. *Rev. 2. 5. I will remove the Candlestick, if ye will not repent.*

4. We shall get corrupt Ordinances and Judgments, which if a Man do; yet shall not live: We are like to hear Sermons, that shall not convert, and a Worship, that GOD never invented, nor allowed, instead of the living Ordinances of GOD, *Hos. 9. 3. They shall eat unclean Things, in the Land of Assyria; they shall not dwell in the Lords Land.*

5. We are like to meet with the Sword, or Famine, and Pestilence, if we repent not; when we shall praise these that are dead, when to die, will be more tolerable than to live.

6. The eternal Curse of GOD in Hell's Fire shall follow, and complete your Misery; this is the last, and never ending Wo.

Observ. 5th. Idolatry continued in, provokes GOD to unchurch a People; and not to be their GOD, nor acknowledge them any more for his People: God is very jealous, that Folk serve him, in his own Way, and when Men meddle with his Worship, to add, pair, or change, he is much concerned; that look as when *Adonijah* sought *Abisbag* from *Solomon*, he answered, *He may*

They seek the Kingdom as well: So Men, tho' they profess God as their God, and worship him, if they do not worship him in his own Way; he says, *Let them seek my Kingdom as well*: Men, will use Religion, it is true, but will use it for themselves; and hence will meddle with it, according to their Interest: Hence with the LORD, *I will not be your GOD: I am not her Husband.*

Now, how is this understood? There is no Tie betwixt GOD and an idolatrous and corrupted Church: There are five respects (which I shall but name) in which this is true.

In regard that by their Idolatry, they have done all in them lay, to disown GOD as their GOD, as the Adulteress does, what in her lies to disown her Husband.

2. In regard of Merit; she had in point of Justice merited, that GOD should give her a Bill of Divorce.

3. *I am not her Husband, nor she my Wife*; that is *declaratively*, she hath by her Adulteries declared, That she was dissembling, when she entred into Covenant with me, to become mine, and to take me for her Lord; she hath by this declared, that she was never real  
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in this; but that I was her Husband only in the Word, and indeed am not her Husband.

4. Effectually GOD would carry towards her, as towards one, with whom he had nothing ado, but as a severe Judge.

5. In regard of what he was beginning to do to her; *I am not her Husband*, that is, I am already putting her away, and entring upon the Process of a Divorce, and was casting her already by Degrees off.

And now to shut up our Discourse at this Time, I would have the LORD's People to lay this Point more to Heart than they do, and especially such as hear the Curates; I have six sad Words to say to them, and I end.

1. Your sin, tho' some of you excuse it, and some of you mince it, as tho' it werē a small Sin; it is a grievous Sin, no less than Idolatry in the Sight of GOD, and ye shall be judged as these who break Wedlock, the Drunkard, the unclean Person, who knows no better shall fare better than you.

2. Ye will stick to your Sin, your Sin is not only grievous, but it is sticking, and so binds and chains you, that ye



Ye cannot leave it, let us never so clearly speak against it.

3. Your Sin not only prejudices your selves, but ye reflect upon GOD and publicly dishonour him.

4. Ye give a sad Discovery and Suspicion of all your Profession, that ye want true Grace. Beloved, I do not say, all that bide from the Church have true Grace; but this I say, These who go, and bow the Knee to *Baal*, discover they want Grace; and that Straightness as to the Truths of the Times, is one of the best outward Evidences of Election; 'tis plain *Rom. 11. Paul* proves, that there was an Elect Seed in *Elijah's* Time from this, that there were no less than *Seven thousand that bowed not the Knee to Baal*.

5. Tho' ye disown profane Folks, and the open Persecuters, and would be counted amongst the People of GOD; yet because ye follow your own crooked Ways, GOD will lead you forth with the *Workers of Iniquity*; Hear this ye idolatrous Professors, ye and Prelates and debauched Folk shall share alike.

6. Ye shall not rejoyce when *Zion* rejoyces, ye shall never be in Court or Credit, when the Lord turns back the Captivity of his People, whatever ye signify

ty before, ye shall never bear that Bull  
again, as it was said of Egypt, *Ye shall  
no-more lift up your Heads among the Ge-  
dars; but shall be despised Reeds*, Ezek. 44  
10, 11, 12, 13.

*The LORD bless what hath been said,*  
AMEN.

*F I N I S.*





